

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Office Action of April 13, 2007 has been carefully reviewed and these remarks are responsive thereto. Claims 1, 4, 12-14, 16-21, 25, and 26 were examined.

Claims 1, 12, 14, and 25 are amended herein. Support for the amendments to the claims can be found in the specification at, for example, page 3, paragraphs [06] and [07], and pages 5-8, paragraphs [16] – [21], and in the Figures at FIGS. 2 and 3A-3C. Claims 4, 13, 17, 19, 21, 22, and 26 are cancelled herein. Claims 2-3, 5-11, 15, 20, and 23-24 have previously been cancelled. Thus, claims 1, 12, 14, 16, 18, and 25 are pending following entry of this amendment. No new matter is added by the amendments to the claims, and entry thereof is respectfully requested.

Reconsideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 12, 14, 16, 18, and 25 are allowable over Ambrosini

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 4, 12-14, 16-21, 25, and 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,609,121 to Ambrosini (Ambrosini). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 4, 13, 17, 19, 21, and 26 have been cancelled, thus mooted the rejection over Ambrosini as to those claims.

Claims 1 and 14 are independent. It is respectfully submitted that amended claims 1 and 14 and the claims dependent therefrom are allowable over Ambrosini.

Ambrosini discloses a Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) interface to a directory assistance system. According to Ambrosini, a request to add a new data entry to a directory can be validated by an LDAP plug-in function before the new entry is added; if the data is invalid, the plug-in function can abort the LDAP add operation and return an error message to the LDAP client. Ambrosini at col. 6, lines 41-47.

However, in Ambrosini, the validation function is performed within an LDAP server housing the directory access function. Validation is performed by means of an LDAP plug-in that is “in a server computer hosting an LDAP server.” Ambrosini at col. 7, lines 37-57; col. 9,

lines 36-38; see also Figs. 1 and 3. Thus, in Ambrosini, the call is received by the LDAP directory access server before any data evaluation or validation is performed.

In contrast, amended claim 1 recites a method for “intercepting a call from a client computer to a directory access server, the call consisting of one of a request to add data to a directory associated with the directory access server, a request to modify data in the directory, and a request to delete data from the directory, the call further including at least one attribute associated with data having a data content and a data structure” and “evaluating the attribute according to a first rule governing data content that may be forwarded to the directory access server and a second rule governing data structure that may be forwarded to the directory access server.” Amended claim 1 also recites that the call is forwarded to the directory access server only if the attribute complies with the first and second rules; otherwise the call to the directory access server is rejected and an error message is returned to the source of the call. Amended claim 1 further recites that the step of evaluating the call and determining whether the attribute complies with the first and second rules is “performed by an attribute rule enforcer interposed between the directory access server and the client computer.”

Similarly, amended claim 14 recites an attribute rule enforcer comprising “a rule validator and a transaction monitor, the rule validator and transaction monitor being interposed between a client computer and a directory access server” wherein the transaction monitor intercepts a call from a client computer to a directory access server and diverts the call to the rule validator, and wherein the call to the directory access server is forwarded only if it complies with a first rule governing content of data that may be forwarded to the directory access server and a second rule governing structure of data that may be forwarded to the directory access server.

Thus, both amended claim 1 and amended claim 14 recite that the data in a call from a client computer must be evaluated and validated before it can be forwarded to the directory access server. This is very different from the LDAP-based method and apparatus disclosed in Ambrosini, in which the call to the directory is received and evaluated within the directory access server, not outside of it as in the present claims. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that amended claims 1 and 14 are allowable over Ambrosini. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1 and 14 and allowance is requested.

Claim 12 depends from claim 1; claims 16, 18 and 25 depend from claim 14. It is respectfully submitted that these dependent claims are also allowable over Ambrosini by virtue of their dependence on allowable base claims 1 and 14, respectively, and further in view of the additional inventive steps recited therein. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 12, 16, 18, and 25 over Ambrosini and allowance of those claims is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

All rejections having been addressed, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully request prompt notification of the same. However, if the Examiner has any questions or believes for any reason that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at (202) 624-7326.

Respectfully submitted,
POWELL GOLDSTEIN, LLP

Date: July 12, 2007

By: /Joslyn Barritt/
Joslyn Barritt, Registration No. 56,296
901 New York Avenue NW, 3rd Floor
Washington, D.C. 20001-4413
Tel: (202) 624-7326 (direct)
(202) 347-0066 (main)
Fax: (202) 624-7222

JB/mmd